



Trust No: IT 8147/00 \* Non-Profit Org No: 011-266 \* Tax reference No: 0050 56 16 5  
Public Benefit Org No: 930 013 787

24 November 2019

## **SANWILD WILDLIFE SANCTUARY MEDIA RELEASE**

On Friday, 22 November 2019, Mr. Andre Grobler ("Grobler"), co-founder, manager and trustee of the SanWild Wildlife Sanctuary ("SanWild"), was voted off the Board of trustees of the SanWild Wildlife Trust ("the Trust") and he has been asked to leave the SanWild Sanctuary.

This decision was taken after the consideration of various factors and the actions of Grobler over a period of time. Grobler's actions were, unlawful, immoral and against the spirit and provisions of the Trust Deed. Grobler's actions were done clandestine and he made every effort to hide what he was doing from the other trustees. Grobler was accused, of amongst others, the following: -

1. that Grobler initiated, provided photographs and gave permission that 8 SanWild lions be advertised on a Hunting website, and further illegally obtained permits for the said lions to be exported and sold to one Mr. Jan Steinman, whom has been accused of canned hunting and animal cruelty. This was done without the knowledge and consent of the other trustees at the time;
2. that Grobler has allowed the hunting of a Kudu bull and a Wildebeest on SanWild in order, by his own admission, to settle his personal debt to certain individuals;
3. that Grobler has been misappropriating funds paid to him for the upkeep and management of SanWild and the feeding of the animals;
4. that Grobler neglected his farm duties and trustee responsibilities;
5. that Grobler utilized his neglect to create negative publicity (for his own reasons) and so brought the SanWild Sanctuary in disrepute;

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6. that Grobler mis – informed individuals who had entrusted animals to SanWild’s care, that their animals have been killed and/or had died and upon being confronted by the other trustees, stated that what he had said was just a joke;
7. that Grobler assault a fellow trustee, Mr Wim Scheepers, when he went to SanWild to have a new fan installed in the cold room at the sanctuary and that he did so in order to hide what he was doing on the sanctuary; and
8. that Grobler refused Mr. Scheepers and his other fellow trustees access to SanWild Sanctuary property, stating that none of the other trustees were allowed onto SanWild since they had no business being on SanWild and that they would have to get his approval and make an appointment prior to being allowed onto SanWild.

The trustees and various volunteers and community forum individuals have within 12 hours of removing Grobler as trustee, managed to re-instate access onto SanWild and put an anti – poaching unit on the farm. They are and continue to patrol the perimeter fences and securing all access points out of and onto SanWild.

Grobler has been under investigation by the trustees since he applied in the Polokwane High Court to oust his fellow trustees and usurp control of the Trust and its assets.

Grobler’s attempts to sell SanWild lions for pure personal gain, were thwarted at the time by Mrs Lizel Kachelhoffer, a trustee of SanWild.

New trustees were appointed in terms of a court order at the end of August 2019. The new trustees together with other volunteers have been putting procedures and systems in place to ensure the well-being of the animals under its care, properly manage the SanWild Sanctuary as well as its finances in a transparent and accountable manner.

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A proper inventory of assets on SanWild is being conducted, and a budget and business plan are in the process of being implemented.

Grobler has since the appointment of the new trustees become more and more abusive towards them, using foul language, cursing and insulting them. Grobler has also been non-cooperative in any of the trustees' attempts to put new systems in place, threatening the lives and wellbeing of trustees and the animals; the final straw being his assault on Mr. Wim Scheepers and him admitting having hunted and/or allowed the hunting of at least two animals.

At the time Grobler was voted off as trustee, which he agreed to, indicated to the board that he would undertake no further work on SanWild, that he was giving the day-to-day management of SanWild over to the other trustees to carry on and again threatened that "the trustees must from now on watch their backs".

The remaining trustees believe that this was a further attempt by Grobler to create chaos and to make the Trust unmanageable.

Since Grobler was voted off the Board of Trustees of the SanWild Wildlife Trust, he has taken it upon himself to make it as difficult as possible for the new trustees to establish proper control over SanWild. It has also become apparent that Grobler is attempting to blame the other trustees for all the trust's woes. Grobler appears not to take any responsibility for any of his actions.

Despite the disruptive efforts of Grobler, an anti-poaching unit was dispatched to the Sanctuary as early as Friday night and every effort is being made to feed the lions and other animals in need of food.

During Saturday the trustees were able to telephonically obtain chickens from a local chicken farm which unfortunately lead to the regrettable accidental feeding of baby chickens to two lions during the immediate aftermath of Grobler's ousting as trustee.

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Upon the inexperienced first-time relief volunteer worker's arrival at the chicken farm, she received a pre-packed batch of chickens which unfortunately contained a number of baby chickens.

The inexperienced relief worker then regrettably fed some baby chickens to two lions only and the grown chickens to the remainder of the lions. The feeding of baby chickens to lions is most definitely not the norm and simply due to a genuine mistake by an inexperienced volunteer worker, selflessly doing the Trust a favour in the absence of Grobler who, up to his dismissal, performed the task of feeding the lions and other animals.

Grobler also controlled, by virtue of his position, a lot of the trust assets which he has not returned or offered back, and it is now apparent that he is in fact refusing to return the Trust's property.

Grobler has indicated that he wished to remain resident on SanWild until end January 2020. His continued disruptive behavior has however made this impossible and a decision has been taken by the remaining trustees that the Trust will approach the High Court in Polokwane for urgent relief in this regard.

At present, Grobler's movements on the sanctuary is being restricted from the main house to the gate.

At this time, the remaining trustees disassociate themselves from the actions of Grobler and from any past wrongdoing by the Sanwild Wildlife Trust. The remaining trustees have visibly acted against elements considered to be detrimental to the Trust and its work and will continue doing so.

The relevant wildlife authorities, community forums and the South African Police Services have been notified of Grobler's actions and all efforts must now be focused on the protection of the wildlife at SanWild.

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The trustees are inviting a group of concerned wildlife conservation organizations to consider offering advice and funding with regard to the immediate and future protection and wellbeing of the wildlife in the sanctuary.

We are shocked and deeply saddened by the discovery of the mismanagement of the wildlife at SanWild. We would like to make it very clear that we are utterly opposed to canned hunting, the lion bone trade and any mistreatment of animals. It is for these reasons that SanWild has a strict no hunting policy on the Trust property.

Further updates will follow; however, we ask the public to please understand that our main focus and efforts at this stage is to normalize and secure the situation that has developed at the SanWild sanctuary and that that is occupying the majority of the remaining trustees' time.

**The SanWild Wildlife Trust trustees:**

Lizel Kachelhoffer  
Walter Swanepoel  
Wim Scheepers

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